

Kakwa language

The **Cacua**^{[6][4][7]} language, also known as **Kakua**^[5] or **Kakwa**, is an indigenous language spoken by a few hundred people in Colombia and Brazil. There are many monolinguals, especially children.^[6] Apart from being close to or a dialect of Nukak, its classification is uncertain.

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Overview

The language is spoken by indigenous American Cacua people that live in Colombian and Brazilian^[7] interfluvial tropical forests higher than 200 metres (660 ft) in elevation. The people have traditional livelihoods such as nomadic hunting-gathering and swidden agriculture.^[8] There are some non-native speakers of Cacua that are predominantly missionary workers. Their presence has resulted in the translation of religious Christian texts, notably the Christian Bible.^[9]

Distribution

The speakers are located in Wacara (In Cacua: *Wacará*) which is 30 kilometres (19 mi) from Mitu (In Cacua and Spanish: *Mitú*) in the lower Vaupes Region.^[6] (In Spanish: *Departamento del Vaupés*). A second Kakua settlement is "Nuevo Pueblo" (New Town), which is an inland forest village between the Vaupés and the Papurí rivers.^[1]

Classification

There are two dialects: Vaupés Cacua and Macú-Paraná Cacua. Cacua is mutually intelligible with Nukak,^[6] and is considered a dialect of the latter by Martins (1999). See that article for further classification.

Other names for this language include: *Bára*, *Cakua*, *Kákwa*, *Macu de Cubeo*, *Macu de Desano*, *Macu de Guanano*, *Macú-Paraná*, *Wacara*.^[6]

Phonology

Kakwa has 6 vowels: /a, e, i, ɨ, o, u/.^[10] The /o/ sound occurs only marginally in the Wacara dialect, while being attested for the Nuevo Pueblo dialect. In nasal contexts only five vowels can occur.^[1]

Kakwa has seventeen consonants:

Cacua	
 <div>Kakua, Kakwa</div>	
Native to	Colombia (Vaupés), Brazil (Amazonas)
Native speakers	250 (2015) ^[1]
Language family	<div>Puinave-Maku ?^{[2][3]} <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northwestern Puinave-Maku<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nukak-Kakwa<ul style="list-style-type: none">Cacua</div>
Writing system	Latin
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	cbv Cacua ^[4]
Glottolog	cacu1241 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/cacu1241) ^[5]

Consonants

		Bilabial		Labiodental	Alveolar		Postalveolar	Palatal		Velar		Glottal
		plain	creaky-voice		plain	creaky-voice		plain	creaky-voice	plain	creaky-voice	
Stop	voiceless	p			t					k		ʔ
	voiced	b	ɸ		d	ɖ				g	ɠ	
Affricate							tʃ					
Fricative				f								h
Nasal		m			n			ɲ				
Approximant								j	ɟ	w	ɰ	

Nasalization in Kakwa is a prosodic property of the morpheme that affects all segments within each morpheme except voiceless stops and glottalized palatal glide in initial position. Each morpheme is either completely nasal or completely oral.^[1]

Kakwa is a tonal language and displays 3 contrastive phonological tones: Rising (LH), falling] (HL), and low (L).^[1]

Grammar

The language uses both subject-object-verb and object-verb-subject word order.^[6]

Bilingualism and literacy

Reports gathered by SIL in 1982 stated that many speakers are monolingual, particularly children.^[1] Another promising aspect is that even though literacy is low by international standards, it is higher in the aboriginal language, at around 10%, compared to 5% in Spanish, the opposite situation of most indigenous languages of the Americas.^[6] Cacua uses a Latin alphabet.^[6]

Sample text

Ded pah jwiít jwĩ jwíih cãac cha pahatji naáwát^[11]

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External links

- Colombian Languages Collection of Katherine Bolaños Quiñónez (<https://ailla.utexas.org/islandora/object/ailla:124476>) at the Archive of the indigenous Languages of Latin America. Contains 43 archival recordings of over 1 hour of spoken Kakwa.
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